

B4 means for transmitting, by the computer, an electronic mail message corresponding to the information.--

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-53 are pending in the present application; Claims 1, 18, 23 and 40 have been amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-3, 8, 12-17, 18-20, 23-25, 34-42, 45-46, 48, and 50-52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuwabara, U.S. Patent No. 6,065,136 in view of Motoyama, U.S. Patent No. 5,544,289. Claims 4-7, 9, and 26-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combined system of Kuwabara-Motoyama in view of Forse'n, U.S. Patent No. 6,073,166. Claims 10-11, 21-22, 32-33, 43-44, 47, 49, and 53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combined system of Kuwabara-Motoyama in view of Miyachi, U.S. Patent No. 6,108,492. Those rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent Claims 1 and 23 have been amended to include the limitation of "detecting a characteristic of the email" by the computer associated with a device in order to determine whether the message is for the device. Claims 18, and 40 have also been similarly amended. It is initially noted that this amendment is supported by the originally filed specification.¹

In the present invention, as a non-limiting example of the step of "detecting a characteristic," when the computer associated with a device receives an e-mail, the computer

¹E.g., specification page 27, lines 10-13.

has to determine if the e-mail is for the attached device by examining whether a predetermined code exists in the message body. By contrast, the Computer Part C1 of Kuwabara does not have to make this kind determination. The e-mail received by the device is for the Computer Part C1 and Main Part 11. *No determination process is required for recognizing the incoming e-mail* by the Computer Part C1. Most of all, there is no disclosure or suggestion of “detecting a characteristic of the email” in Kuwabara.

In rejecting the determining feature recited in the independent claims, the Office Action cites column 5, lines 65-67 and column 6, lines 1-22 of the Kuwabara patent. From column 5, line 65 to column 5, line 22 of Kuwabara discloses a communication in the form of electronic mail is sent from the maker to the user A, the Computer Part C1 of user A then sends the inspection results in the form of electronic mail back to the maker. There is no disclosure or suggestion of any kind of determination process made by the Computer Part C1 to determine if a communication is sent for the associated Main Part 11.

It must be appreciated that this step of determining whether the e-mail is for the device associated with the computer is not disclosed or suggested by either Kuwabara or Motoyama. Moreover, even if Kuwabara and Motoyama could be combined, the combination would not result in a system or method in which there is a “determining whether the [electronic mail] message which has been received is for a device associated with the computer by detecting a characteristic of the email.” Therefore, the rejection of independent claims 1 and 23 should be withdrawn.

Now addressing the rejection of Claims 18 and 40, Claims 18 and 40 recite the use of a device driver as well as the limitations of a business office device. Using a device driver with the present invention has many advantages, which are not taught or suggested by the prior art of record. First of all, the device driver allows the present invention to be very easily

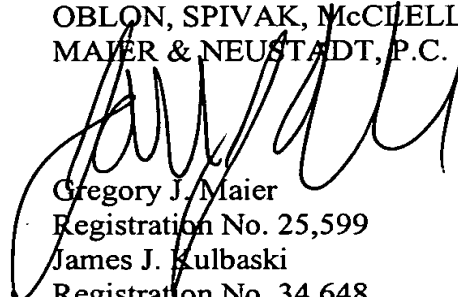
implemented, if desired, simply by updating the device driver of the business office device, such as the printer, which may be easily done by the user himself. Secondly, there is no need to update the software such as an application program within the device, and there is no need to worry about a separate application program specially installed by the user.²

There is no disclosure or suggestion of using a device driver in any of the cited prior art. Specifically, Applicant respectfully points out that there is no disclosure of "device driver" in any of the citations in rejecting of Claims 18 and 23 in the outstanding Office Action pages 2 and 3.

Based on the above differences between the present invention and the prior art, each of the outstanding rejection is respectfully requested to be withdrawn.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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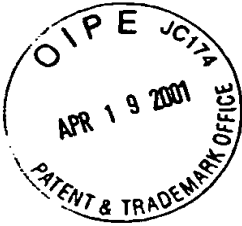


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²It is to be noted that the present invention does not preclude the use of separate software, if desired, but the device driver may allow such elimination, if desired.



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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1, 18, 23 and 40 as follows:

--1. (Twice Amended) A method of processing messages, comprising the steps of:
receiving an electronic mail message by a computer;

determining whether the message which has been received is for a device associated
with the computer by detecting a characteristic of the email, the device being a business
office device including a processor;

transmitting a communication from the computer to the device, [when] in response to
the step of determining determines that the message is for the device; and
operating the processor of the device in response to the communication.

18. (Amended) A method of transmitting, comprising the steps of:

transmitting information from a device to a computer associated with the device, the
device being a business office device including a processor;

processing the information by a device driver within the computer; and
transmitting, by the computer, an electronic mail message corresponding to the
information.

23. (Twice Amended) A system for processing messages, comprising:

means, associated with a computer, for receiving an electronic mail message;

means for determining whether the message which has been received is for a device associated with the computer by detecting a characteristic of the email, the device being a business office device including a processor;

means for transmitting a communication from the computer to the device, [when] in response to the means for determining determines that the message is for the device; and

means for operating the processor of the device in response to the communication.

40. (Amended) A system of transmitting, comprising the steps of:

means for transmitting information from a device to a computer associated with the device, the device being a business office device;

means for processing the information by a device driver within the computer; and

means for transmitting, by the computer, an electronic mail message corresponding to the information.--